(c) Whether any dialogue in this regard is expected by Government of India with new regime in Pakistan in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) None, Sir.

(b) One Air Force personnel and two Army personnel were released through the intervention of the International Committee of Red Cross on 3rd June 1999 and 16th September 1999 respectively.

(c) Does not arise.

Air crashes in IAF

1396. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of IAF fighter planes lost in crashes during the last three years, alongwith the number of pilots killed in each crash;

(b) what were the precise reasons for those crashes and how do they compare with other foreign countries; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to improve the safety measures and with what results?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Since 1997-98 till 9th December 1999 IAF has lost 46 fighter planes in crashes and 16 pilots were killed.

(b) The main reasons of these accidents were technical defects, human error and bird hit. It is not possible to compare the accident rate of IAF with those of other countries in the absence of correct and complete statistics, relating to number of accidents, fleet size, the annual flying hours, the operational environment, the quality and magnitude of infrastructure etc., which are different in different countries.

(c) A high Powered Committee on fighter Aircraft Accidents (COFAA) was constituted under the chairmanship of Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri to analyse the causes of the accidents which submitted its report in September, 1997. It has made certain recommendations to minimise accident rate. Implementation of these

recommendations involves changes in organisational structure, procedures, training, design, technology etc. Necessary instructions have been issued to the agencies/Departments concerned to take suitable action on the recommendations of the Committee. Out of the 84 recommendations made in the report, 55 have been implemented so far. The flight safety records of IAF has shown positive improvement. During 1960s, the average losses were 40 aircraft per year which have been reduced to 22 aircraft per year in the 1990s.

Expenditure involved in the Kargil conflict

1397. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total estimated expenditure involved in the Kargil conflict;

(b) what steps are being taken to modernise the weapons systems for high altitude warfares;

(c) whether Government propose to allocate additional funds to Defence sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The total estimated expenditure incurred in Kargil Conflict is Rs. 1984 crores.

(b) Modernisation of weapon systems including those required for high altitude warfare is an ongoing process.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Supplementary Grants for Defence have already been sought.

Movement of armed forces of neighbouring countries

1398. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the movement of the armed forces of neighbouring countries;

(b) whether there is any threat to us; and

(c) what action Government have taken so far or propose to take?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the position.